



Newsletter

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Starting this month, we will be putting out a monthly Sunburst Newsletter to help staff at our various sites, board members, volunteers and consumers stay on top of what is happening within our organization. We hope it will be exciting for you to learn more about the activities and staff at our locations from Hamilton to Polson to Eureka and all the other offices in between.

Three Staff Attend Training in California

Sunburst staff Julie Fleck, Lisa Thiel and Rita Collins attended a three-day training in February at The Village in Long Beach, California. The MHA Village serves adults and young adults with mental illness. It provides a range of services for these individuals and also trains professionals in a model that is recognized nationally. The Village incorporates many types of mental health care: treatment, rehabilitation, self-help, and family/community involvement. Within these, the Village staff emphasizes an emphasis on choice, equality between staff and the people they serve, encouragement of continued growth and an environment of “high risk/high support. They identify “quality of life” outcomes – measuring living, work, education, finance and social goals – to ensure effectiveness and accountability. Our staff found the training very useful and plans to implement ideas they brought back into the Sunburst mental health centers. We currently have three centers in Kalispell, Polson and St. Ignatius and hope to expand services to a rural site in the coming year.

Therapist and Artist

Emily Pray who works at Sunburst’s Polson, St. Ignatius and Kalispell offices is also an amazing artist. A beautiful collage she created is currently hanging in the Kalispell site’s waiting room. The image captures the brightness of the Sunburst Foundation’s effort to nurture “individuals, families and community, and organize and promote cultural and creative opportunities, as well as provide resources to further educate and promote mutual respect, tolerance and healthy values in the community.” Emily is currently having an art show at Ceres Bakery.



Have you checked out our website?

We have a fabulous website that features information about all of the Sunburst services and locations. It is a good place to go in case you have forgotten the phone number for the Thompson Falls office or want to send a thank you note to Tina in Kalispell. Just go to “Contacts” on our web site to find out mailing addresses, street addresses and phone numbers for any of the eight Sunburst locations. Our web site also offers a photo album featuring places and people that are part of the Sunburst experience. For those of you in the north Lincoln County area, you can find out about cultural and educational events that are sponsored through the Eureka Sunburst office. Concerts, plays, films and community classes are listed. You can even listen to a selection of songs that were composed and performed by musicians who live in the Eureka area. The site is easy to find at www.sunburstfoundation.org. Just look for the !

Volunteer Support

Joyce, a retired librarian, volunteers at Sunburst in Eureka once a month. She helps in the Arts and Education office answering phones, signing up people for classes and organizing files. Joyce also took a training with Julie Fleck to offer assistance when people walk into the office asking for help. The Eureka staff and volunteers put together a resource notebook so volunteers can easily find the right phone number or name when giving referrals to individuals who walk in. The support of volunteers like Joyce goes beyond their hours in the office as they become more knowledgeable in general about resources in their community.

This Issue's Featured Board Member...

The Sunburst Community Service Foundation is fortunate to have a great Board of Directors. Seven individuals volunteer their time and give support to help Sunburst develop policies, maintain a clear vision for existing programs and possible growth, and provide financial oversight. Carol Lechner has been a Sunburst board member for two years now. In her regular job, Carol is a Specialist in Community Facility and Multi-Family Housing Programs for USDA Rural Development. She joined the Sunburst board because of her interest in the mental health services and Family Concepts. She understood that what both of these Sunburst programs provide "is so needed in the community." When asked about her current vision for Sunburst, Carol responded that she wants to see the organization "continue to play an important role in the community for families and the mentally ill." Carol is also helping Sunburst staff to find ways to make board members more knowledgeable about the range of Sunburst programs. When Carol isn't working for Rural Development and helping Sunburst, she enjoys spending time with her family. She considers herself lucky to have family nearby including five grandchildren. She also enjoys reading, cooking and going to the lake. We are very glad that between her job and family, that Carol makes the effort to support Sunburst by serving on our board.

FAMILY CONCEPTS GOES VIRTUAL!

Numerous people worked together to create six awesome training videos for Family Concepts staff. Karen Dean, Julie Fleck, Kathy Estes and Mary Chaboya master-minded the idea to develop videos that could be viewed by staff at remote locations whenever it was convenient for the Family Support Workers. Topics range from "Engaging the Hard to Reach" to "Self Care and Boundaries" and star Julie Fleck and Mary Chaboya! Video technician Abram Slama did the filming and editing to create the six videos. All the videos were then uploaded to the Sunburst website where they can be accessed by staff. Karen Dean, Family Concepts supervisor, remarked, "The videos are part of Sunburst's effort to provide a comprehensive ongoing training resource for Family Support Workers. Our workers are isolated in small communities where there aren't many training opportunities. We focused the videos on topics that are important for the Family Support Workers throughout their time on the job. They can review them whenever they feel the need. For example, the video "Testifying in Court" could be reviewed each time one of our workers is called to testify. We currently have ten Family Support Workers throughout our organization that will be using these videos. They will be especially helpful to newly hired workers. We have a new FSW in Helena and are in the process of hiring a new one in Hamilton. Mary Chaboya, our Training Supervisor, will use these videos while training new workers." Other videos in the series include "Building Attachments", "Notes Protocol" and "UA Specimens".



Ideas for future issues?

If you have ideas for stories you would like to see in the Sunburst Newsletter, contact Rita at our Eureka office. We are happy to feature stories on any of the many individuals connected with Sunburst, successes, kudos or how Sunburst does what it does so well. If you have a topic you would like us to cover or a photo of a piece of art you did, please send it our way. We will be glad to hear from you. Rita can be reached at 406/297.0197 or at mtsunburst@yahoo.com Thanks for your ideas!